

**Massachusetts Department of Public Health
School Health Unit**

**GUIDELINES FOR REVIEWING AND APPROVING APPLICATIONS TO REGISTER FOR
FULL DELEGATION OF PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS TO UNLICENSED PERSONNEL
105 CMR 210.000**

School districts (public and nonpublic) that may apply for registration are listed in the Massachusetts Department of Education's school directory profile.

Only applications that meet the following criteria will be reviewed:

1. **Dates and Signatures:** All required signatures and dates signed must be complete and original. *(Please note: No facsimiles or copies of the original application will be accepted for review.)*
2. **Printed Names:** The names are printed in a legible way.
3. **Attendance at the Medication Delegation Workshop:** The date for attendance by the school nurse contact at the School Health Institute program, "Delegation of Medication in the School Setting," is included. *(Please note: the nurse contact's date of attendance should fall within the previous five years.)*
4. **School Building Profile:** The "School Building Profile," a detailed document reflecting your school district's nursing coverage, is completed correctly with all fields accurately documented. This school building profile is critical when evaluating whether your school district may delegate prescription medications. *(Please note: the application is for the entire school district.)*
5. **Sufficient Numbers of School Nurses:** Delegation of prescription medications to unlicensed personnel is not intended to take the place of employment of professional school nurses (as defined by the Massachusetts Department of Education), but rather to add flexibility to the nurse's daily practice. 105 CMR 2120.000 requires that

"When a School Committee or Board of Trustees, in consultation with the Board of Health where appropriate, has registered with the Department of Public Health and authorized categories of unlicensed school personnel to administer prescription medications, such personnel shall be under the supervision of the school nurse for the purposes of 105 CMR 210.000. The School Committee or Board of Trustees, in consultation with the Board of Health where appropriate, shall provide assurance that sufficient school nurse(s) are available to provide proper supervision of unlicensed school personnel."

In order to determine the safe level of coverage of school nurses, i.e., "sufficient numbers of school nurses", a needs assessment should be completed with attention paid to those children with special health care needs, as well as emergency response time for each building. The school nurse to student ratio (in each building) generally shall be no greater than 1:750 in a general population. ¹ *(Please note: in reviewing the application only the designated school nurses onsite will be considered when applying this ratio.)*

In the event that a single building in the applicant district exceeds the 1:750 ratio, but is no greater than 1:900, the Department may consider this application individually, after requiring further information, including plans and timelines to achieve the above ratio in that specific building.

9/10/04

¹ Consistent with 1998 legislative report, *Options for Developing School Health Services in Massachusetts*, the recommended school nurse to student ratio is 1.0 fulltime equivalent (FTE) certified nurse in each building with 250 to 500 students. In buildings with more than 500 students, there should be 0.1 FTE for each additional 50 students. For buildings with fewer than 250 students, the ratio is calculated at 0.1 FTE: 25 students.